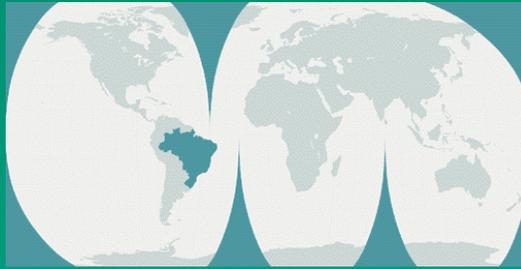


# Facts About Brazil

Leading a Portuguese expedition, Pedro Álvares Cabral discovered Brazil on April 22, 1500. The country's name originated from the Portuguese term used for red wood, the most exploited item when Portugal claimed Brazil as one of its colonies.



Brazil is the 5th largest country in the world (3.3 million square miles), larger than the continental USA. Today, about 180 million people, composed of a variety of peoples and races from all over the world, live in Brazil, greatly influencing its culture and diversity. It has the world's second largest population of African ancestry, behind Nigeria. Except for some native tribes living in remote areas, all people speak Portuguese.

The Amazon rainforest, encompassing the world's largest river in volume of water, covers nearly half of the country's territory. Other landscapes feature wetlands, semideserts and coastal beaches. Brazil is home to the largest number of plants and animals on earth.

The Brazilian economy is among the ten largest in the world. Agriculture plays a major role (soybeans, coffee, oranges), but a third of the country's economy already comes from the industrial sector. The top two export products are soybeans and airplanes.

